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MINISTRY for CHRIST *in* PORTO RICO.

THIS brief sketch is written to commemorate the completion of twenty-five years of service on the part of the Christian Church in Porto Rico. It is also a tribute to Rev. and Mrs. D. P. Barrett, who began the work and still continue at their post on the field. May the reading of these pages quicken our interest in the welfare of our island neighbors.

WILSON P. MINTON.

Ministry for Christ in Porto Rico

January 1901—January 1926

I.

"RICH PORT"

PORTO RICO, "Rich Port," is an island one hundred twenty miles long and thirty-five miles wide, beautiful beyond description in its natural setting, with its great backbone of mountains fringed all the way round by a narrow strip of lowlands slipping into the Atlantic on the north, east and west, and into the Caribbean on the south. In this scenic wonderland of natural beauty one may revel in the mountains and valleys, the rivers and the rills, the blue sky and the bluer seas, the green grass and golden harvest, the fruits and flowers, and the sunshine mingled with showers. Here, it would seem, there is everything to make life really worth while. And here there are 1,300,000 souls to enjoy it to the full, but they do not enjoy it. Life seems to be teeming—310 people to the square mile—but there is terrible lack of fulness of life. Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly;" and again he said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." But he has not yet fully come to Porto Rico.

Only five years ago one* who has spent years in missionary work on the island wrote that sixty-six percent of the Porto Ricans were still illiterate after twenty-two years of American control. Only forty-one percent of the children of school age were actually in school and even the forty-one percent in many, many cases were going under terribly crowded conditions. Yet the Porto Rican is eager to learn and he is capable, as we of the Christian Church have evidence in the boys who have studied in our colleges.

This same writer only five years ago stated that ninety percent of the Porto Ricans have hook-worm and usually malaria also, due to the lowlands, the hot tropical climate, unsanitary conditions and the ever-present mosquito. The death rate is twice as high as that in continental United States. Half of the deaths occur among children under five, which is higher than the infant mortality in India. Three out of five, we are told, die without having had a chance for relief by medical attendance. Of course the past five years have seen some improvement in these conditions but there is still a long, long way to go before this situation can be materially changed.

Not only is there lack of fulness in the mental and physical life, but in the economic and social life as well. Poverty abounds. The class system is terrible. It is said that fifteen percent of the population holds all the wealth

*Arthur James, in Twenty Years in Porto Rico.

of the island. The balance eke out a living as best they can. Eighty percent of the people live in the country and many almost literally hang on to the mountains in the effort to cultivate small patches of land. Tobacco, coffee, cane, rice, beans and tropical fruits are the main crops. There are very few good cows. Chickens and pigs are scrawny. The goat alone is monarch of all he surveys. Men in the cane fields and girls in the fruit packing-houses receive pitifully small wages. The only salvation of the people economically seems to be the abundance of fruit.

On the side of a mountain in Porto Rico

These economic conditions lower the ideals. Sixty percent of the people are white, thirty-five percent mulatto, and five percent black. There is little public opinion against immorality for which situation the priesthood seems to be largely responsible. It is said that over 100,000 couples are living together in Porto Rico without civil or religious sanction. Children of separated couples have to shift for themselves.

The lack of fulness in the mental, the physical, the economic and the social life has aggravated the lack of fulness in the spiritual life. About fifty percent are Catholic, though the Roman Church had fallen largely into decay up to the time of American possession and the entrance of Protestant Missionaries in 1898. Then the Roman church made a great effort to revive its work and its prestige. In 1920, while only twelve percent of the people were said to be Protestants, the attendance at Protestant services was larger than that of the Catholic faith to which fifty percent of the people subscribed. The balance seem indifferent to any religion.

In spite of this sad picture of Porto Rican life these people have in the past few years shown their ability to develop and they are moving forward. With remarkable wisdom and far-reaching vision the Protestant missionaries have divided the territory of the island so that no mission over-laps another. There are doubtless objections to this plan of parceling out territory to various denominations, but certainly it is a step far beyond the old plan of competition and rivalry, as the work done there has already abundantly testified.

II.

THE BEGINNINGS

1901-1906

INTO this land of matchless natural beauty and terrible human need, the Christian Church came with its first missionaries in 1901 and for a quarter of a century has carried on its work with varying success. There have been many problems and countless struggles.

On the twelfth of January, 1901, Rev. and Mrs. D. P. Barrett, and Rev. H. J. Rhodes sailed from New York for Porto Rico as missionaries from the Christian Church and landed at San Juan, the capitol, on the seventeenth. Mr. Rhodes, who had had previous experience in Japan, went down for just a year to help start the work, but Mr. and Mrs. Barrett turned their backs on home and friends to devote their lives to it. After twenty-five years of service they are still at their post. During these years they have witnessed and had a large share in the development of our work on the island. Here their children have been born and reared, and here they have woven their lives into the lives of the people among whom they have labored.

Rev. D. P. Barrett

Mrs. Eva O. Barrett

Immediately upon landing, the Barretts and Mr. Rhodes proceeded to Ponce on the south side of the island and the next largest city in Porto Rico. This city, according to agreement with the other denominations, became the western extremity of the field of the Christian Church, which extends eastward along the lowlands skirting the Caribbean for about thirty-five miles and a width of from six to ten miles from the coast up into the foot-hills. Here, we are told, are approximately 70,000 people for whom the Christian Church is wholly responsible in carrying the gospel.

Within three weeks after reaching Ponce our missionaries had started a day school with seven pupils which increased to a total of ninety by the end of the year. This school was not continued much beyond the first year as the United States government began to provide for this education.

These new missionaries were fortunate in securing a splendid teacher who had had previous missionary experience among his people. On Easter Sunday, three months after they landed, "as the clock was striking nine," so wrote Mr. Rhodes, "we stepped out upon the street with our little organ and Spanish song book in hand. Only a minute's walk and we were at the hall. We went in and made ready for the service. Not a native had yet entered the house, though several were on the streets not far away. Mrs. Barrett began playing

the good old hymn, "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth," and the people began rushing to the door full of anxiety and amazement at the procedure. The first to enter were some colored ladies pretty well dressed, then an old man came in and took a seat pretty well front; others came in; the crowd outside was steadily growing; there were nurses with tiny children, boys and girls of all ages from one to twenty. Some were dressed neatly while the garments of others were in strings."

After some songs and prayer the Spanish teacher talked from the 24th chapter of Luke and at the evening service from John 3:16. And thus began our work in Porto Rico with the missionaries living in a rented house and holding services in a rented hall.

On January 18, 1902, just a year to the day from the time our first missionaries reached Ponce, Rev. Thomas E. White of North Carolina and Rev. Miss Jennie Mishler of Leaf River, Illinois, landed in that same city as recruits to the missionary force of the Christian Church. In the meantime, Mr. Rhodes had completed his work of assisting in establishing the mission and had returned to the States.

Mr. White, impressed to preach from childhood, graduated from Elon College and deliberately chose to go to Porto Rico because he wanted to serve in the most needy field he could find. For about nine years he gave himself unstintedly to this work, spending most of his time in the Salinas field, where to this day the marks of his faithful service are plainly to be seen. But failing health on the part of both himself and family made it necessary to give up his work and come home. He has been and is still serving as a most loyal and devoted pastor in the Southland.

Miss Mishler, born of German parents, became a Christian as a girl of twelve and had some experience in rescue mission and evangelistic work before going to Porto Rico. She took up the work at Santa Isabel where most of her service was rendered and where she accomplished much for the kingdom. For years, in spite of strong opposition, she continued her work at Santa Isabel, which was one of the most difficult fields on the island. Soon after the beginning of 1912 Miss Mishler came home, however, and never returned to the work, though she still retains an active interest in all that is being done there.

When Miss Mishler and Mr. White sailed for their first term, Rev. and Mrs. J. P. Barrett, D. D., and daughter Ethel sailed with them at the request of the Board to visit the mission and to be of mutual help to both the workers and the Mission Board in endeavoring to enlarge the work. Dr. Barrett was greatly encouraged by the outlook and on his return wrote a book describing their travels.

Our first church in Porto Rico was organized at Ponce, February 22, 1903, with five charter members. One of these, Rafael Hernandez, became a fine Christian worker and was ordained to the ministry February 23, 1913, and continued in spite of his own ill health and the sickness of his family until 1917 when he resigned as pastor of the Ponce church.

These earlier years were made difficult for Christian work because of the entrenched Romanism and the accompanying ignorance and superstition, but

Arus Christian Church in background at right

by the close of 1905 churches, though with very small memberships, had been established at Ponce, Arus, Santa Isabel, Jauca, and Salinas. All these continue today and each has a commendable gain in membership. In addition to these churches in 1905 work was carried on in four outposts.

The first conference was organized February 27, 1906 and marked one of the most important events connected with the work. Delegates from five churches coming together at Ponce were organized under the name of the Porto Rico Christian Conference. At this conference Mr. Hernandez and Esteban Martinez were licensed to preach. The first thing the churches were asked to do was to raise a total of fifty dollars to help secure a lot for a chapel at Arus, and this they accomplished before the second conference, though the lot was not secured until later.

III.

SUNSHINE, CLOUDS, AND SOME SILVER LINING

1907-1914

THE seven years that followed are well described in the title of this chapter. The church building at Salinas was erected in 1907 at a cost of $2,500, and dedicated the following February. The lot on which the building stands near the plaza was donated by the town authorities on condition that a church be built within nine months. The Foreign Mission Secretary, Dr. Morrill, made two trips to Porto Rico during the year, first to make a tour of the field and later to receive the Salinas lot for the Board and start the church building.

The Canas chapel built by the Porto Rico Conference and now moved to the new location Clausells. These Sunday-school children are at the new location.

For several years between 1908-1911 two of our members from the States were teaching in Ponce and rendered valuable assistance to the work. Miss Ethel Culver of Dayton was followed by Mr. and Mrs. W. C. McCloud, of Virginia, both of whom by their devotion to the cause made these years especially fruitful in developing Sunday-school and Christian Endeavor work. A marked evangelistic spirit manifested itself. Mr. White reported a gracious revival in Salinas and the schedule of the Barrett's weekly activities showed a tremendous lot of work being done in the Ponce field. New points were being opened and conversions resulted. Young people of promise were also being developed, among them being Pedro Roman who continues as one of our most faithful pastors, now on the Salinas circuit.

A long drought was broken in 1909 by bountiful rains which greatly encouraged the poor people of our district. The lot for a chapel at Arus was secured and a small chapel at Canas near Ponce was built and dedicated by the Porto Rico Conference, with furnishings made possible by gifts from Miss Culver and friends in Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Special gifts from the Waverly, Va., church made possible the part time employment of Miss Micaela Reyes, who had shown great aptitude for Sunday-school and Christian Endeavor work. It is interesting to note that of the $3,800 appropriated for

The old house in Santa Isabel where Miss Mishler lived and worked. The door to the left indicates where Dr. Ruth had his office and the next door the dispensary. The splendid group of young people shown is part of the Sunday-school when Mr. Martin was there. He is shown second from the extreme right.

Porto Rico in 1909 Mr. White wrote that $987 would go for rent. There were then only three native workers employed and two of these for only part time.

The following year a tiny chapel was secured at an outpost, Manzanilla, through the gift of Mr. A. V. Priddy of West Manchester, Ohio. Miss Mishler secured a house and lot in Santa Isabel for the Mission at a prominent corner of the plaza, which is the center of the social life of every Porto Rican town. The house was repaired and the Santa Isabel church people gave liberally to help furnish it for services and also as a home for Miss Mishler. Clouds hovered, however, for Mr. White was compelled to come home during the year. His work was carried on by the McClouds, Mr. McCloud giving time to it aside from his government teaching.

The property at Santa Isabel made it possible for Miss Mishler to open a dispensary July 1, 1911. A Dr. Ruth of the Methodist Church made weekly visits and Mr. Barrett extended the work to Salinas. In a single year several hundred cases were treated at each place. During the year a chapel was erected and furnished on the Arus lot at a cost of about $700. The work of our missionaries was very much strengthened by the visit of Rev. W. F. Jordan of the American Bible Society, who had offered his services to us as a missionary, but who could not be employed for lack of funds. His agents did a great work in putting portions of the Scriptures into the hands of many in our field.

The Foreign Mission Secretary, Dr. Morrill, went to the island in February, 1912, to let the contract for the much needed church in Ponce, funds for which had been accumulating for some time. This was a year of disaster to our working force. Miss Mishler came home in March and did not return. The McClouds left in June. Lack of funds forced us to drop Mr. Roman, but the Portsmouth, Virginia, church pledged the funds to restore him to the work. One or two other men had to be dropped. Mr. Juan Romero carried on the work left by Miss Mishler at Santa Isabel. After serving the best he

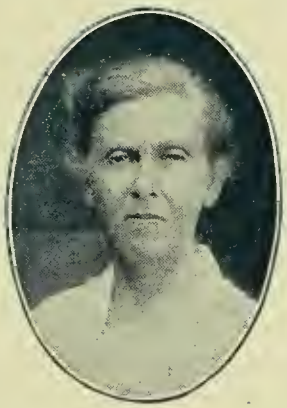
The Ponce church, showing the Daily Vacation Bible School which was conducted in 1924.

could in various fields until 1921 he was sent to the Porto Rico Union Seminary where he completed a two-year course and then came back to our work to which he is most loyal. The death of Mrs. Hernandez and his ill health, temporarily lost this worker to us.

Early the following year (1913) Dr. and Mrs. J. F. Burnett sailed for Porto Rico where they dedicated the new Ponce church February 23, and also made a tour of all our work to the great advantage of the cause both there and in the homeland. While they were there they received a taste of missionary difficulties when one of the frequent and sudden floods carried the new Arus chapel off into a cane field.

Ill health forced the Barretts to come home on a prolonged furlough in 1913 leaving no American missionary on the field. The work suffered heavily. There was tremendous need for new missionaries. For lack of funds and workers the Jauca church had to disband and the need for men at Salinas and Santa Isabel and a woman at Ponce was imperative to stop further losses. At this juncture Miss Olive G. Williams applied to the Board for appointment, November 14, 1914, and though forty-seven years old, which was much beyond the age limit, she was appointed. For years she had been interested in missionary work, dating from early childhood, when she had given to Dr. J. P. Watson, the first dime for The Children's Mission, which was largely responsible for the developing of our mission work. Miss Williams had had a large experience in newspaper work, being associated with her father in that business and also as his secretary while serving in the House of Representatives. A tour of the world in 1899 and 1900 crystallized her missionary

interest. When she applied she had no close relatives and entered the work determined to devote the remaining years of her life to it. How well she wrought in the next ten years is known to many of our people who followed her splendid service. Her death at Lakemont, N. Y., November 16, 1925, just eleven years and two days from the time she applied for appointment, closed a career of utter abandon to the work, the results of which can never be fully told.



Olive G. Williams

Wash Day in Porto Rico

IV.

STEPS FORWARD, DENOMINATIONAL AND CO-OPERATIVE

1915-1918

WHEN Miss Williams was placed under appointment, what was then the Third Christian Church, now Christian Temple, of Norfolk, Virginia, assumed her salary support and continued to pay it until her death. On January 23, 1915 she sailed for Porto Rico and reached Ponce on the 29th, where for most of five years she labored for souls.

The church at Arus Playita was organized with six members in 1915. A lot next to the Ponce church was purchased for $900 of which $600 was given by a donor who withheld his name from publication. Mr. Barrett's work was greatly increased because of his appointment as Superintendent of the mission, but the addition of a Ford secured after several years effort to raise special funds for the purpose, made it possible for him to frequently visit all the churches in the field.

Rev. R. Sandoval, who was ordained by the Christian and Missionary Alliance, came to us in 1916 and has been with us ever since. Dona Delfina Zayas, who had helped in carrying on the work at Santa Isabel after Miss Mishler left, continued and still continues to give most faithful service as a Bible woman, now at Ponce. The following year Rev. Hernandez resigned from the work, but we were able to secure part-time assistance from Juan Rodriguez, a teacher in the public schools, and Mr. M. E. Martinez, an assistant on the staff of the Union religious paper, Porto Rico Evangelico, who settled as pastor of Salinas. Before resigning, Rev. Hernandez translated "The Origin and Principles of the Christian Church" by Dr. Burnett into Spanish and this proved a great help to our national pastors in understanding the spirit and work of the Christian Church. The Jauca work was reorganized by Rev. Sandoval and the Salinas work greatly strengthened, Dona Delfina assisting there. The Mission Home in Ponce was bought for $6,000 and the Porto Rico Conference erected the small chapel at Canas, a suburb of Ponce. Our young people in the States were showing unusual interest in the Porto Rico work by agreeing to support workers, and under the leadership of Miss Carrie Robison, they began to raise a fund for a chapel at Santa Isabel for which a campaign had been started the year before. The United States was stirred in 1917 by the action of Porto Rico in voting dry by 38,000 votes just after it had been given United States citizenship. War conditions and the departure of some of the young men who were helping in the work proved no little handicap later on. Then an earthquake did great damage to property, including our Ponce and Salinas churches. It was followed by the terrible influenza scourge. For a week when it was at its worst Miss Williams gave twelve hours a day in voluntary service at the hospital.

One of the most epoch-making events of missionary history was the

Students of the Union Theological Seminary of Porto Rico

Congress on Latin America held in Panama early in 1916. The Christian Church was represented by Dr. Morrill, Mr. Barrett, Mr. and Mrs. F. R. Woodward of Hill, N. H., Rev. and Mrs. William Flammer, pastor of the Union Church in the Canal Zone, Rev. W. F. Jordan of the American Bible Society and Mr. J. H. Warner of the Y. M. C. A. in South America. Following the Congress, Regional Conferences were held in various parts of Latin America to carry out the plan of co-operation there agreed upon. Dr. Morrill and Mr. Barrett went to the Regional Conference in San Juan, Porto Rico, where it was proposed that an Evangelical Union of Porto Rico be launched by the missions having work on the island. Our Mission Board, upon recommendation of Dr. Morrill, Mr. Barrett and the national workers, approved our entrance with five other denominations into the Union which in the past ten years has accomplished great things through the launching of a Union Paper and Printing Press, a Union Seminary and other splendid missionary efforts. The Foreign Mission Secretary was made a member of the Advisory Committee directing the Union enterprise and this representation, which still stands, has been a great boon to the work. By 1920 the Congregational, Baptist, Methodist Episcopal, Disciple, United Brethren, Presbyterian, and Christian Churches were members of the Union. The Union Press publishing the religious paper, Porto Rico Evangelico, is at present being incorporated and the Seminary is adding considerable property.

V.

FRUITS, BY-PRODUCTS AND CONTINUED GROWTH

1919-1922

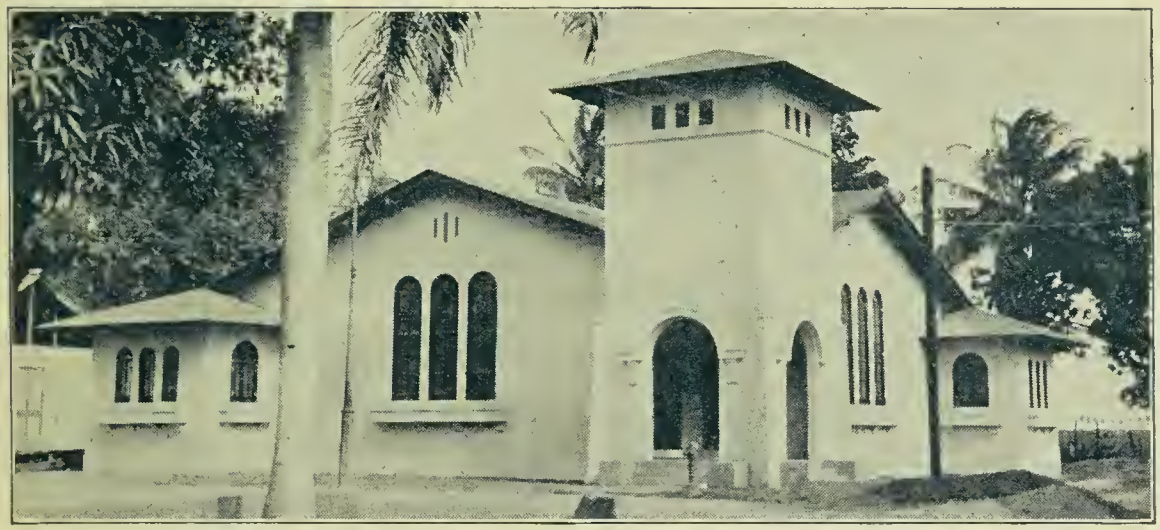
AFTER twelve years of efficient and faithful service Dr. M. T. Morrill retired from the office of Foreign Mission Secretary, January 1, 1919. The sudden death in April, 1920, of the acting Secretary, Dr. E. K. McCord, brought to the office at this time the present Secretary, Wilson P. Minton, who had been elected at the Convention session at Conneaut the year before and granted a year's leave of absence for special study. In this chapter we see the beginning of a harvest from the seed sown in these earlier years.

Miss Williams saw the first real fruits of her labors realized when Juan Monita graduated from the Ponce High School and later came to Defiance for further work. He has since graduated and is at present teaching in a western school with the expectation of returning to Porto Rico for Y. M. C. A. work later. With Mr. Monita came Juan Garcia and Manuel Rodriguez who also graduated from Defiance. The former is now teaching in Porto Rico with the hope of becoming a medical missionary to his own people. The latter has just accepted a responsible position as representative of a large United States firm. This same year Victor Rivera, under the encouragement of Mr. Barrett, came to Elon where he later graduated and gave two years to our mission, largely in the interest of Sunday-school and Christian Endeavor work, before taking up the teaching profession.

On December 22, 1919, Miss Williams welcomed to Porto Rico as bride and groom, Mr. and Mrs. Penn G. Snyder. Mrs. Snyder was Miss Amy Ruse of Dayton who for several years had shown such great interest in our work as office assistant in the mission rooms. Mr. Snyder was engaged in the bee business at Aibonito, and during the years that followed these two were always lending assistance to our missionaries in all sorts of difficulties and became to them towers of strength in time of need.

The bright spot in this year's work was the volunteering of Rev. and Mrs. W. H. Martin for work in Porto Rico. Rev. Wm. Q. McKnight had previously been appointed to this field, and was ready to go, though his preference was for Japan. Mr. Martin was at the time pastor of Mr. McKnight's home church in the Western Indiana Conference and came to Dayton to volunteer his service. Though somewhat beyond the age limit he was accepted because of his peculiar fitness for the type of work needed at that time and because of his splendid preparation for service in a Latin American country. This made it possible for the McKnights to go to Japan the following spring.

The Martins, with their son Paul, sailed February 28, 1920, and after months of most trying experiences waiting for their goods and securing a house, they finally settled at Santa Isabel. During the delay Mr. Martin applied himself studiously to the language and before many months was making



The Santa Isabel Chapel standing where the old building formerly stood

real headway with the work in his field. Unfortunately Mrs. Martin found it absolutely impossible to become acclimated and after some months struggle was forced to return to the States in September. But Mr. Martin stayed on alone in the hope that her health would improve and they could continue the work to which both of them had set their hearts and which they had learned to love with the consuming love of real missionaries. For nearly eight months Mr. Martin struggled on alone, himself experiencing much difficulty from ill health. He was furnished a Ford and made excellent use of it, carrying on some of Mr. Barrett's visitation work during his furlough. He also acted as Mission Treasurer. Among other things he succeeded in getting the young people of the church to give one offering a month for missions and opened up a new outpost at Paso Seco. Here in May, 1921, he preached his maiden sermon in Spanish and rejoiced to see some conversions. But soon after he was forced to accept the inevitable and come home to look after Mrs. Martin. They still entertained hopes of being able to return to their beloved work in Santa Isabel. But this privilege. for they always esteemed it such, has been denied them. From the standpoint of our work on the island, the fifteen months stay of Mr. Martin with its consequent expense, was a fine investment for the kingdom, but at what terrible cost to the Martins, only they can tell. They have never recovered from the effects of those months in Porto Rico.

Something of the hold of our missionaries on the national workers is noted when we read that the Barretts were showered with parting gifts by their Porto Rico friends when they came home in June, 1920, for their regular furlough. The spirit of Jesus does bind us close together regardless of race or color. Mr. Barrett attended the October Board meeting while on this furlough and reported four national workers employed (three men and one woman), three American workers (one woman and two men) and close to 70,000 people in our field. His furlough extended to February, 1921, to enable him to take

The Salinas Parsonage, Mr. Barrett and Pastor Sandoval in center

some school work at Elon. When they returned they left two of their six children (Alice and Olyn) in school at Elon.

The greatly increased cost of operation and living expenses made it necessary to increase the appropriations for the running expenses of the work. Building operations, too, were proving far more costly because of post-war conditions than at first planned on. Only the funds from the Forward Movement made it possible for us to proceed with the work on the same scale. It is significant that the Porto Rico churches joined heartily in the program of the Movement.

During the absence of the Barretts, Miss Williams continued her work at Ponce, and Mr. Martin, who was still on the island, at Santa Isabel. Miss Williams had at her own expense given a young lady, Miss Caledonia Vasquez, some kindergarten training, and together they opened our first kindergarten in Ponce in 1921. Her neighborhood and industrial work was also begun in Ponce. When Mr. Martin came home, Dona Delfina was transferred from Ponce to Santa Isabel. A young woman who had been helping at Salinas resigned. So in May, 1921, Miss Williams began her work in Salinas, where for five years, at first with fearful opposition, but later with the hearty approval of the town authorities who were completely changed by her fine effort, she strove to really help the people through the industrial work and Christian service.

Fortunately, a few months before Mr. Martin came home he had been able to work with a young man, Rev. Ojeda, at Santa Isabel, who had come to us shortly before. He had at one time been under the direction of Rev. Jordan, of the American Bible Society, and came with excellent qualifications for the work. He continues with us, being recently located at Salinas after four years of effective work at Santa Isabel. Among other things, Rev. Ojeda has been

much in demand to represent us on teams doing Union Evangelistic work on the island.

Growing missionary interest at the home base and larger service on the field characterized this period. The Irvington, N. J., church raised a thousand dollars for a parsonage at Arus but when a good title could not be secured they gladly transferred the gift for a similar parsonage at Salinas where the pastor was about to be forced out of town because of inability to find a place to live. The Irvington people sent along several hundred dollars more to repair the newly purchased property. As the work developed and the national pastors found new opportunities for touching people in the little outlying villages, it became necessary to secure for them horse and buggy outfits as means of travel on the mud roads. The Wakarusa, Indiana, church furnished four hundred dollars for this purpose and made two pastors happy.

At the request of the Mission Board the Foreign Mission Secretary, and Dr. J. O. Atkinson, Secretary of the Mission Board of the Southern Christian Convention went to Porto Rico to study the field. They sailed in September, 1921, Mr. Martin going along to close up the work he had so splendidly begun and left with such genuine reluctance. The recommendations of the Commission calling for a more comprehensive program of service were later adopted by the Mission Board. This included the adoption by the mission of a more definite plan for increase in national self-support and since that time there has been much greater progress along this line. Miss Vasquez completed the first year of the Ponce kindergarten and began the second with larger attendance, in the meantime securing her teaching diploma. A kindergarten was also started (1922) in Salinas and we finished paying the debt on the Ponce Mission Home.

Interior of rented preaching place where Miss Williams worked at the Salinas Playa. She is standing at the front (right) with Rev. Sandoval at the left and Mr. Pedro Lind, Superintendent of the Sunday-school between them. Seated on the front row can be seen Dr. J. O. Atkinson (left), and Rev. W. H. Martin.

The Mission Board, meeting during The General Convention of the Christian Church at Burlington in October, decided to let the contract at once for the building of the chapel in Santa Isabel. The corner stone was laid before the end of the year. Miss Williams, who was on furlough at the time of the Convention became very ill soon after and for many weeks was in a serious condition at Raleigh, N. C., but she recovered sufficiently to go back to her beloved work soon after the first of the next year.

VI.

LENGTHENING THE CORDS AND STRENGTHENING THE STAKES

1923 –

THESE years in the midst of which we now find ourselves have been marked by definite efforts to strengthen the work by keeping up the force of missionaries, adding much needed building equipment and particularly by an effort to draw out the national workers into larger responsibility for the work. How well we have succeeded these closing pages will tell.

Our first Daily Vacation Bible School in Porto Rico, at Salinas, 1923. Miss Williams in background.

The first interesting event of 1923 was the Daily Vacation Bible School at Salinas, the first to be undertaken in our work in Porto Rico. Miss Williams also reported that up to this time the industrial work had increased the original investment of $100 to $500. The needle work was being done largely at Ponce under the careful supervision of Mrs. Barrett.

Another event of the year was the dedication of the Santa Isabel Chapel, on September 7, built at a cost of $12,901.66. This amount was not all raised by the young people, as it was so much more than the original estimate, and the Woman's Board came to the rescue in order to make possible the kind of building really needed in this strategic location. But this beautiful and useful building stands as a monument to the interest and loyalty of our young people and to the patient, plodding efforts of their leaders. The names of hundreds of our boys and girls were deposited in the corner stone when the building was erected. It is interesting to know that the members of our Porto Rico churches gave the money to purchase the beautiful native wood pulpit furniture for the new building.

Still another event of the year was the sailing of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce W. Morton for missionary service. Mr. Morton of Newmarket, Ontario, had been appointed in the hope that he might be able to develop some agricultural work and aid in the enlarging of the industrial work. On July 10 he married Miss Esther O. Brownsberger of Ringwood, Ontario, and their going together to this great work has been a boon to our whole cause on the island. The Ontario Christian Conference at once assumed the salary of these workers. The Mortons took up their abode for some time with Miss Williams, assisting in

the industrial work, while seeking to gain a working knowledge of the language.

Early in 1924 we received word that the rented home in which Miss Williams was doing her industrial work in Salinas was about to be sold and there was no other suitable home in the town available. When the facts were published offers of one thousand dollars from one individual and one hundred dollars from another were soon made. But Mr. and Mrs. A. F. Foor, Everett, Pa., agreed to assume the full cost of $2,800 for the home and the other two donors graciously permitted their gifts to go to the purchase of a very much needed parsonage in Arus. Thus we have from time to time been saved great embarrassment to the work by the timely and generous response of real missionary friends. The newly acquired home has been called the Foor Neighborhood House and continues to be the scene of genuine missionary service to a needy people.

Mr. Bruce W. Morton

Mrs. Esther O. Morton

The Barretts came home on their regular furlough and during their stay here Mrs. Barrett had to undergo a serious, but happily successful operation for goitre. Those of us living under such ideal conditions as we have in America, can scarcely realize the severe physical handicaps missionaries are so constantly called upon to face. During the Barrett's furlough the Mortons moved to Ponce and in addition to language study and the oversight of the Ponce work they directed the extensive repairs made on the Ponce Mission Home. Here again the Woman's Mission Board came to our rescue with funds amounting to more than $2,000 to make possible these necessary improvements.

During the year two hundred dollars from the industrial work and two hundred more from private gifts to Miss Williams were used in the purchase of two lots in a suburb of Ponce to which our little chapel formerly at Canas was moved, thus opening up an opportunity for larger service. At this time also our young people under the leadership of Miss Robison began to raise a fund for a parsonage near the new church in Santa Isabel. The North Carolina Woman's Board sent over three hundred dollars toward the building of a chapel at Salinas Playa, the village by the sea, near Salinas proper, which Miss Williams loved so well and where she was doing effective work. It is our hope to have this building erected soon as a permanent memorial to her life and work and additional funds are being received from individuals for that purpose. In this one year, 1924, missionary societies in the States sent more than four hundred garments for the industrial work.

Miss Rosina Lawrence, a graduate of Defiance, spent the winter of 1924

and 1925 teaching in the Salinas public schools and was just beginning to render very effective assistance, first to Miss Williams and later to the Mortons when illness forced her to return home. Mr. Romero finished his course at the Seminary, and with his bride took up work at Penuelas in February. In June he organized a church with twenty-five charter members. He and Mr. Ojeda were ordained in September. Kindergartens were conducted at both Salinas and Ponce and in the summer a Daily Vacation Bible School at each place. An interesting item is the long journey Miss Williams took afoot over the mountains toward Aibonito, the home of Mrs. Snyder. She did not think it would be far, but was forced to remain in a mountain hut over night and reached her destination next day foot-sore and weary, but with information that our work for which we as a church are responsible has not yet been even partially covered.

Soon after the first of the year 1925 Miss Williams, who had made a constant struggle against illness was forced to come home. The story of her

The Foor Neighborhood House at Salinas with some of our workers.

recent home going already recounted in these pages is familiar to most of our people. The Barretts and Mortons had much sickness, but in spite of it all the work moved forward. The Mortons took up their station at Santa Isabel and have been doing some splendid things. They have continued to handle the books of the Treasurer. They have taken over the direction of the Industrial work and launched a successful kindergarten and a Daily Vacation Bible School. Mr. Barrett has given much time to assisting in various parts of our entire field. Mrs. Barrett continues to handle part of the needle work at Ponce.

The Arus property before mentioned was acquired during the year. Other property additions were held up by inability to secure clear title but additions are to be made soon. The Warren, Indiana, church presented the Board at its October meeting with a fund of eight hundred dollars to build and equip a chapel in one of our outposts.

Something of the progress of the work may be seen from the brief comparison of statistics for 1905 and 1925 given at the close of this sketch. Figures, of course, do not tell all, but they do help us to see the decided trend upward which our work in Porto Rico is taking. In the immediate future we hope to see other steps taken in securing more property, training national helpers and the addition of one or two more missionaries to the force. We must keep on lengthening our cords and strengthening our stakes. May the years ahead be years of increasing fruitfulness until Porto Rico—Rich Port—may be rich not only in its marvelous natural setting, but rich also in the fulness of its spiritual life.

A Comparison

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN PORTO RICO

	1905	1925
Missionaries	4	4*
National Workers	3	8
Organized Churches	5	6
Outposts	17	12†
Kindergartens	0	2
Daily Vacation Bible Schools	0	3
Church Members	82	340
Sunday-school Enrollment	320	920
Christian Endeavor Enrollment	0	236
Industrial Work	0	3
Total Money Raised by Churches	$ 74.50	$ 1,170.83
Paid on Pastor's Salaries by National Church	$ 0.00	$ 507.00
Appropriation for Year	$4,000.00	$13,896.00
Property Valuation	0.00	$50,000.00

*The 1905 report includes the Barretts, Miss Mishler and Mr. White. The 1925 report includes the Barrets, and the Mortons. In the meantime Mr. and Mrs. Martin have given fifteen months of service and Miss Williams more than ten years in Porto Rico.

†In 1905 the report of outposts included all towns where preaching services were held, regardless of whether they were held in a rented hall or in the open air. The 1925 report includes under the head of outposts only those where we rent a hall for regular services.

Dates of Interest

1901—Rev. and Mrs. D. P. Barrett sailed as our first missionaries to Porto Rico, accompanied by Rev. H. J. Rhodes. Reached Ponce January 18. First public service Easter Sunday.

1902—Rev. T. E. White and Miss Jennie Mishler reached Ponce for missionary service January 18.

1903—First church organized in Ponce, February 22.

1906—Porto Rico Christian Conference organized, February 27.

1907—Foreign Mission Secretary Bishop visited Porto Rico.

1908—New church at Salinas dedicated, February.

1910—Corner lot and house secured at Santa Isabel.

1911—Miss Mishler opens dispensary in Santa Isabel, July first; Mr. Barrett extends it to Salinas. Chapel at Arus dedicated.

1912—Foreign Mission Secretary Morrill visited the island to let the contract for Ponce church.

1913—Ponce Church dedicated February 23, Rev. and Mrs. J. F. Burnett being present.

1915—Miss Williams sailed for missionary service in Porto Rico, January 23.

1916—Representatives of Christian Church attend Panama Congress on Latin America; Dr. Morrill and Mr. Barrett go on to Regional Conference in San Juan, where Evangelical Union of Porto Rico is launched.

1917—Mission Home in Ponce bought, and chapel at Canas erected. Porto Rico votes dry by 38,000.

1920—The Martins sailed for missionary service February 28; four young men from Porto Rico enter our colleges. Six denominations, the Christian Church included, united in publishing the Porto Rico Evangelico.

1921—Miss Williams began her work in Salinas; Mr. Martin compelled to come home because of Mrs. Martin's illness; parsonage at Salinas purchased. Foreign Mission Secretary Minton and Dr. J. O. Atkinson visit Porto Rico. New system of self-support successfully launched.

1923—Miss Williams held first Daily Vacation Bible School. Santa Isabel Church dedicated. The Mortons and Victor Rivera sail in September.

1924—Foor Neighborhood House in Salinas purchased. Two lots in Ponce suburb purchased with proceeds of Industrial Work and other gifts.

1925—Miss Williams forced to come home. Parsonage at Arus purchased. Miss Williams passed away at Lakemont, N. Y., November 16.

1926—Christian Church observes completion of a quarter century of ministry for Christ in Porto Rico.

An outpost rented preaching place. Dr. J. O. Atkinson in white suit at center; Rev. Ojeda to his left; Rev. W. H. Martin wearing straw hat; Rev. Sandoval to his left and Rev. Romero to his right.

INDEX

First mention only of missionaries, national workers, and churches are given here.

Missionaries—

Barretts, 5; Mr. Rhodes, 5; Mr. White, 6; Miss Mishler, 6; Miss Williams, 10; Martins, 14; Mortons, 18.

National Workers—

Mr. Hernandez, 6; Mr. Martinez, 7; Mr. Roman, 8; Mr. Romero, 9; Mr. Rodriguez, 12; Dona Delfina Zayas, 12; Mr. Sandoval, 12; Mr. Rivera, 14; Miss Vasquez, 16; Mr. Ojeda, 16.

Church Organizations—

Ponce, 6; Arus, 6; Santa Isabel, 6; Salinas, 6; Arus Playita, 12; Penuelas, 19.

Property—

Salinas Church, 8; parsonage, 16; Foor Mission Home, 19; Manzanilla Chapel, 8; Santa Isabel lot, 9; Canas Chapel, 12; Santa Isabel Church, 18; Ponce Church, 10 and 12; Ponce Mission Home, 12; Clausells lot, 19; Arus lot and chapel, 8 and 9; Parsonage, 20.

Interdenominational Work—

5, 12, 13.

Types of Work Other Than Evangelistic—

Dispensary, 9; Industrial Work, 16, 18, 19, 20; Kindergartens, 16, 17, 20; Daily Vacation Bible School, 18, 19.

Some of our workers in Porto Rico. Front row, left to right, Dona Delfina Zayas, Mrs. Morton, Pedro Roman. Back row, left to right, Rev. A. Ojeda, Mr. Barrett, Miss Williams, Victor Rivera, Rev. Juan Romero, and Rev. R. Sandoval. Mr. Morton took the picture. Mrs. Barrett is absent.

The Christian Church

Foreign Mission Department

W. P. Minton, Secretary

C. P. A. Bldg. Dayton, Ohio